

May 2009

# S.E.A.L.I.F.T

## THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND



French boarding team members provide security outside the pilot house aboard Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat during exercise Loyal Mariner 2009 March 6.

# MSC SHIPS

## Platforms For Partnership

Article by Anna Hancock and Rosemary Heiss

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INSIDE — SEALOGPAC ships exchange cargo • SEALOGFE participates in Korea exercise



# 2009 update from the commander’s wheel book

Last December, for my January Sealift article, I covered a series of topics I carry around in my “wheel book” – that small memo pad that many leaders and managers use to write down observations and tee up action items for their organization. Since these commander’s comments will be published in the May 2009 *Sealift* issue and five months have passed, I’d like to update you on some of those topics, as well as provide you insight on some new ones.

### The economy, the new administration and MSC

Back in December, a lot of focus was on the deteriorating situation with our national banking, mortgage and other credit institutions. Then came AIG, additional stock market turbulence, “Big Three” automaker financial problems, continued downslide in other facets of the retail sector and the rest of the world feeling our pain. I know of no one around my immediate and extended family (and I would wager all of MSC) who has not been impacted by this global economic recession.

The new administration is working hard to address the national strategic aspects of our economy and where we need to go from here, as well as the United States’ need to pursue solutions that will support improving the global economic picture in kind — pretty tall order for President Obama and his new team.

How will this ultimately impact MSC? Principally, through financial decisions made as part of the Navy’s Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution System (PPBES) process. The PPBES process takes into account what the Navy expects to receive as its share of the Department of Defense’s annual and future Total Obligation Authority (TOA) – the annual amount of funds given to the fleet in the Navy’s Operation and Maintenance, Navy (OMN) budget. This OMN budget includes funds allocated to MSC’s Navy Working Capital Fund which we use for personnel salaries, maintenance and repair work, information technology, port costs, etc.

What’s happening to our MSC checkbook right now? It is shrinking, along with the fleets’. Navy operations are being trimmed in certain programs, including flight hour and steaming hour programs, as we wrestle with cost-of-war requirements and diminishing OMN budgets. MSC has been asked to absorb our fair share of these reductions, and we are cutting back in some areas, such as placing a Kaiser-class oiler in reduced operating status. We continue to take a hard look at the amount of fuel we consume, the amount of work in our maintenance packages and the money we provide ships for operating expenses, and more reductions may be on the horizon.

My sense is that these fiscal year 2009 Navywide reductions will carry over to fiscal year 2010 and that we can expect other budget reductions. As always, we will work with our fleet customers to prioritize reductions in service, which have a direct bearing on our Navy’s warfighting capability overall. However, I am confident that we have the organizational visibility and wherewithal to make informed, fact-based decisions about where to take risk in these types of efforts.

For example, if we know where we will be cutting back afloat replenishment operations based upon fleet schedule

changes, we should be able to readjust fuel consumption estimates, defer maintenance actions, reduce ship consumable and personnel overtime accounts, and adjust mariner pool processes accordingly. My priority remains keeping our civil service mariner population healthy and able to support changes in afloat manning requirements as new ships enter the fleet and old friends depart.

### Fair winds and following seas

Speaking of old friends, it was truly a privilege to sneak aboard combat stores ship USNS Saturn the Friday before she left on her last voyage for MSC — a painful one, no doubt, for her proud crew as they sailed this fine ship to Philadelphia to join the Navy’s inactive fleet. Just as painful for this great crew was their knowing that their efforts included preparing Saturn for eventual use as a target ship in an upcoming fleet exercise.

So, it was with a great deal of professionalism and reverence that Saturn’s ship’s company ensured that their ship would make the trip fully capable of answering all bells, charting a course which took them out to sea, rather than through the Chesapeake Bay, from Norfolk to Philly.

One sure sign of age for those of us with some years in this profession is looking back at all the fine ships we have had the joy of serving aboard, and sadly recognizing that most of them are either scrapped or have found themselves occupying watery graves. It goes without saying that MSC, the Navy and the nation greatly benefited from Saturn’s extensive list of accomplishments since 1983. And, somehow, I don’t think the spirit associated with this ship minds at all that Saturn will add additional value to the service when she executes her final mission. (She might say, “Take your best shot, shipmate!”)

### Where are the results of the CIV-MAR survey?

That is a question that the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) continues to get from MSC headquarters and me. I believe it has been over a year since we asked our civil service mariner population to participate in the survey, so what’s going on?

It turns out that when DEOMI went to crunch the numbers, it discovered that its information technology application had difficulty with some of its statistical analysis functions — particularly since our civil service manning profiles, licensed and unlicensed billet structure is different than the military manning profiles that DEOMI is used to processing. There was also a little confusion associated with the status of military detachment personnel and how their responses should be sorted and counted. We will continue to work this with DEOMI, and I assure you that the results will be shared with everyone as soon as possible.

### Piracy in waters off Somalia

As I wrap up this article, the crew of MV Maersk Alabama has changed out, and the merchant mariners involved with thwarting the pirates’ attempt to seize their ship are coming home. I imagine it will take weeks to capture all the details of what transpired during their harrowing ordeal. I and many members of our MSC headquarters staff have participated in a number of high-level meetings and discussions concerning piracy and its potential impact to

both MSC and U.S.-flagged commercial maritime operations. We have also reviewed our force protection doctrine, operational practices, and training processes, and reminded all commands to maintain the highest level of force protection readiness when sailing in these waters.

Our ships are routinely afforded additional protection when Navy Embarked Security Teams (EST) are embarked to stand topside crew-served, weapons’ station watches and are prepared to respond to these threats in accordance with established rules of engagement. The presence of an EST, however, doesn’t mean a ship can afford to slack off in other force protection areas.

The pirates are evolving their tactics, clearly evidenced by the shift of their operations away from the Gulf of Aden into the waters east of Somalia. And yet, there are still reports of attacks on commercial ships in waters being patrolled by a significant number of coalition (including USN) warships. Use of mother ships that allow pirates to extend their reach for hundreds of miles, nighttime attacks, rapidly approaching and firing at merchant ships without warning, are some of the ways the bad guys are altering their tactics.

Alert radar and lookout watches, speed, and evasive maneuvering remain effective anti-piracy tactics. And, just because some suspected pirates have closed our ships to the point of being greeted with warning flares or shots does not necessarily mean that the next bunch of bad guys may have gotten the word to steer clear of grey vessels with blue, gold, gray and black stack markings. Stay alert.

### “Press 1 for store location. Press 2 to speak to a customer service representative. Press 3 for billings or payments, or leave a voice mail.”

The Reilly household recently experienced the untimely (but probably overdue) demise of our venerable 17-year-old clothes dryer. So, the admiral quickly doled out a sizeable chunk of change on very short notice for a new, more energy efficient and higher capacity dryer — which stopped operating merely 30 days after we bought it. Then, in accordance with the dryer company’s warranty policy, we called the company’s customer service center to talk to someone about warranty service. That took daily calls for 10 days and two trips back to the place where we purchased the dryer before the casualty was finally restored. What was most irritating was never talking to the same person twice over the phone, having to tell the same story over and over each time, and never feeling comfortable that I was talking to anyone empowered to make decisions.

The reason I have recounted this sad tale of woe is that it somewhat reminds me of concerns expressed by some of you about how hard it seems at times to get in touch with MSC staffers ashore. “Admiral, it seems like all I do is wind up leaving a message on someone’s mailbox, and I never hear anything back.”

I find myself calling MSC staffers and having to leave voice mail messages myself. However, I am not ready to go out and hire additional employees and add additional phone lines – that takes me back to my dryer scenario and not being able to find anyone who could effectively deal with my specific issue.

We do run a lean shore organization

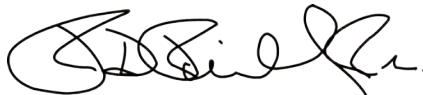
and we are working to adapt our business processes so that we specifically account for specific staff work by the hour. This is known as activity-based costing, and it will take awhile before we have more data in which to better understand the demands placed on our shore staff. We will use that information to evaluate staff productivity and see if there are ways we can explore making more effective use of our time.

However, I don’t want anyone to think that someone in the ranks is deliberately ignoring messages in their voice mail in-boxes — especially for a shipmate calling from an overseas location needing some help for an urgent matter. In those situations, I have found that getting senior leadership involved and reaching into our shore organization via other means (such as e-mail or to other phone numbers) is appropriate, particularly if time is of the essence.

If you are a senior leader and your subordinates are coming to you with these sorts of scenarios, don’t be hesitant to catalog the specifics, speak to (or leave a voice mail for) the person on the beach on your shipmate’s behalf, and if you detect a pattern somewhere in the organization, pass that information to senior leaders ashore. If we need to do better in this area, we will.

As for my dryer? I’m thinking that I should have bought one recommended by a consumer testing agency – even if it meant getting a model with less capacity. Live and learn.

Keep the faith,



Robert D. Reilly Jr.  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
Commander, Military Sealift Command

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# Fast combat support ships conduct mega-UNREP

**By Sarah Burford  
SEALOGPAC Public Affairs**

Off the coast of Southern California, MSC's fast combat support ships USNS Bridge and USNS Rainier were choreographing one of the most challenging underway replenishments in the Navy March 23-24, transferring nearly 1,000 pallets of ammunition and materials and almost one million gallons of fuel.

This was nearly 10 times the volume moved in a regular underway replenishment.

"An underway replenishment of this magnitude is like a dance," explained Rainier's master Capt. William Baldwin. "Everything has

to move together in a certain rhythm and at a certain pace to happen."

The transfer prepared both ships for their next mission — for Bridge, shipyard maintenance, and for Rainier, support to U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Bridge, which was carrying enough supplies and ammunition to support an aircraft carrier, needed to be empty before entering the Cascade General Shipyard in Portland, Ore. Rainier needed to take on the cargo from Bridge as it took over the mission of supporting the fleet, but before Rainier could do that, the military cargo it was carrying had to be transferred to Bridge.

While underway replenishments are nearly an everyday occurrence

in MSC's support of the fleet, this operation was in no way routine due to the sheer amount of materials and fuel being moved. To complete the operation, all movement of materials and use of manpower and aircraft had to be carefully coordinated and monitored to ensure the safety of the ships, the crew and the environment.

To meet the demands of moving the enormous amounts of materials and fuel, both ships became staging and receiving platforms, and all hands were used from the main deck down.

Two fueling and two tensioned-highline stations were used for connected transfer, and two helicopters conducted vertical lifts from the flight decks of each ship.

"We used the entire deck department and the entire cargo department to get this job done," said civil service mariner John Drew, Bridge's operations officer. "We even brought up the ship's stewards to help with flight quarters and to fill out the crew."

The huge cargo transfer happened in record time. Scheduled for three days, the mega-underway replenishment was completed in less than two days. All of the materials were transferred without incident, which allowed Bridge to continue its preparations for its upcoming maintenance period, and allowed Rainier to continue its operational support to the Pacific Fleet.

"This time, the dance was perfect," said Baldwin.

## MSC personnel train for crisis on Korean peninsula

**By Navy Yeoman 2nd Class Deanna Cox, MSCO Korea, and  
Edward Baxter, SEALOGFE Public Affairs**

Military Sealift Command personnel participated in an exercise March 7-20 to train for a real-world crisis on the Korean peninsula. For more than half a century, North and South Korea have maintained a fragile truce and remain, technically, in a state of war. With a 6 million-man strong military in the north, U.S. and South Korean forces use this annual exercise to test their abilities to respond to an invasion from the north.

Exercise Key Resolve/Foal Eagle 2009 included more than 26,000 U.S. service members and more than 200,000 members of South Korea's armed forces. The exercise, held throughout South Korea, involved Key Resolve, which was primarily a command-post

exercise focused on deploying troops and equipment to Korea in the event of an attack, and Foal Eagle, which was a series of field exercises.

For MSC, a real-world crisis on the Korean peninsula would involve the massive influx of sealift ships — delivering cargo and fuel to U.S. and allied troops — and a mass evacuation of thousands of civilians aboard contracted ferries.

Representatives from MSC Office Korea, and sailors from Sealift Logistics Command Far East Reserve Unit 101, SEALOGFE Reserve Unit 102, Expeditionary Port Unit 102 and EPU 115 participated in this year's exercise.

"Mission and operational readiness remain our top priorities, and par-

ticipation in this exercise enabled us to maintain our unit's highest level of readiness," said Navy Capt. Rich Bayard, SEALOGFE Reserve Unit 102's commanding officer.

"You can only be as good as you practice and train to be," said Navy Information Systems Technician 1st Class Alton Clay of SEALOGFE Reserve Unit 102. "This exercise keeps us all prepared according to a well developed plan."

In Korea, Reservists maintained an around-the-clock crisis-action team in order to manage the large number of vessels coming in and out of Korea. Reservists also worked with 10 other logistics units to maintain a comprehensive shipping picture and conducted valuable cross-training with their U.S. Army and South Korean counterparts.

Meanwhile, members of EPU 102 visited six ports and boarded large,

medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Pomeroy, container ship MV MAJ Bernard F. Fisher, Ready Reserve Force ship SS Cape Jacob, MSC-chartered ship MT Maersk Rhode Island, and MV Bonny Star, a Korean-Flag Shipping Program vessel. KFS is a joint U.S.-Korean program, which includes 59 South Korean cargo vessels that can be activated in the event of an emergency. Reserves conducted a survey of the vessels to ensure they could accommodate the appropriate cargo and would be ready to sail.

In Yokohama, MSC sailors simulated the coordination of ship movements between Korea and the Japanese mainland to evacuate 30,000 civilians aboard 12 ferries.

"If there was a real crisis on the peninsula, our Reserve personnel would be ready to hit the ground running," Cruz said after the exercise.

## Prep for hospital ship deployment



The crew loads 175-pound pallets of medical supplies and personal hygiene items donated to Project Handclasp aboard Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort in Norfolk March 24. The donations will be distributed to people in Central and South America and the Caribbean during Continuing Promise 2009, a humanitarian and civic assistance mission in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility. Comfort departed Norfolk April 1 for the four-month deployment.



# MSC ships provide intern

**By Anna Hancock  
and Rosemary Heiss  
MSC Public Affairs**

In the warm, blue water of the Mediterranean Sea, French sailors in a small boat approached and prepared to board an 863-foot-long American commercial ship.

Two weeks later and more than 5,000 miles away — just off the shores of British Columbia — a team of Canadian navy forces embarked rigid-hull inflatable boats with instructions to board and conduct search and seizure operations on two huge American merchant ships.

These operations weren't antagonistic actions by formerly friendly countries. Instead, they were part of well-planned exercises in which ships of Military Sealift Command provided platforms to offer realistic training in visit, board, search and seizure operations to partner nations.

#### **MSC ships as unique platforms**

Visit, board, search and seizure — or VBSS — is the term for maritime operations used to accomplish a range of ship-boarding tasks, from customs and safety inspections to combating terrorism and piracy. These operations are fundamental to safety and security at sea. They are also highly complex, requiring technical skill and coordination that can only be achieved through frequent practice. MSC ships support worldwide readiness by frequently serving as platforms for VBSS training exercises.

MSC's cargo carriers are ideal for these exercises because the ships have

some similarity in size, configuration and crewing.

In March, three MSC ships participated in VBSS exercises.

In the Mediterranean, Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat simulated a suspicious cargo-carrying ship for the French, and in Canada, Maritime Administration Ready Reserve Force ships SS Grand Canyon State and roll-on/roll-off ship GTS ADM WM. M. Callaghan — under MSC's operational control — played the roles of non-responsive, suspicious cargo carriers.

#### **Mediterranean**

Wheat participated in the major NATO maritime exercise, Loyal Mariner, from March 2-13. The 15-nation exercise, which was commanded by Italian Rear Adm. Claudio Gaudiosi, presented participants with a fictitious scenario that began with a political crisis and escalated to a conflict between ethnic groups that required the intervention of the international community.

During the exercise, Wheat played the suspicious ship in three scenarios: two with French sailors and one with U.S. Navy sailors. The exercise scenario was run by a British officer aboard French destroyer FS Montcalm.

"He would say, 'this is how we want to run the exercise,' and we would make it happen, whether that meant providing the fictitious crew with passports or adding props like ammunition or weapons," said Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One exercise coordinator, Navy Chief Operations Specialist Ralph Souders.

Souders, a former VBSS boarding officer, oversaw the exercise and facilitated the training aboard Wheat. He and members of Wheat's crew escorted the foreign boarding teams and acted as safety observers.

Sixteen French boarding teams executed two compliant boarding scenarios, in which the teams checked boarding passes and passports, searched the huge ship and talked to the crew.

"Different countries do things differently," he said, explaining the value of sharing information in a multinational exercise. "After a scenario, we would talk about the different tactics they used to understand how it worked."

After the compliant boarding French scenarios, an 11-member U.S. boarding team conducted a resistant boarding, during which they found mock contraband among the ship's more than 50,000 tons of cargo.

"This is the first time many of them have been on a ship of this size," said Souders. "It's overwhelming for them at first, but once they get used to it, they like it and are pleased with the training."

#### **Canada**

Grand Canyon State and Callaghan were MSC's contributions to a U.S. Transportation Command-sponsored exercise conducted by Canadian naval forces from March 14-20. This was the first time MSC supported Canada in a security exercise mission. The main objective was for the Canadian navy to conduct visit, board, search and seizure exercises to gain the skills

# VB

French sailors use a pilot's ladder to board Military Sealift Command Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat March 6 during Loyal Mariner.



# ational training platforms

necessary to safeguard lives and secure cargo on the high seas.

“The ships have both large-scale equipment on board and the features of commercial vessels,” MSC’s director of operations, Navy Capt. Bill Hardy said of the Canadian exercise ships. “One of the reasons the Canadian navy chose these vessels was to make their routine security exercises more challenging.”

Once the RHIBs were positioned alongside Grand Canyon State and Callaghan, the boarding teams carefully climbed up the sides of each ship. They then reenacted real-world boarding security operations. They took control of the bridge, the engineering plant and the crew.

In real-world VBSS events, boarding teams assess the shipboard structures to determine where the safest and most stable boarding point — like a flight deck on large vessels — is to minimize safety risks to the boarding crew.

Providing a boarding challenge of a different sort, Callaghan’s main deck is laced with wires from 14 heavy-lift cranes — two of which rise about 150 feet above water.

“Callaghan’s freeboard is also unusually high — soaring approximately three stories above water — posing yet another boarding obstacle,” said Doug Nagy, Callaghan’s master. “This is quite high if you have to climb up from a RHIB on a small ladder or line with gear.”

Meanwhile, Canadian Navy forces conducted fast-paced, thorough exercises on the bridge aboard Grand Canyon State, with the crew operating the

ship steadily, maintaining navigational control with no interruption.

The ship had been lengthened and converted from a break-bulk, cargo-passenger ship to a container ship in the early 1970s, and a second bridge was added above the old to restore visibility. The old bridge was converted to a cargo control room.

“This was perfect for the exercise because the role-players had an actual bridge setting and did not have to conduct most of their exercises where we navigate the ship,” said Andrew Diamond, Grand Canyon State’s civilian master.

Canadian forces also used the two old passenger decks with numerous cabins and lounges to conduct reenactments during the exercise without worry about interfering with the ship’s routine.

“The unique layout of this ship was like giving the Canadians two ships for the price of one, a passenger ship and a cargo ship. It was a very large sandbox for them to play in,” said Diamond.

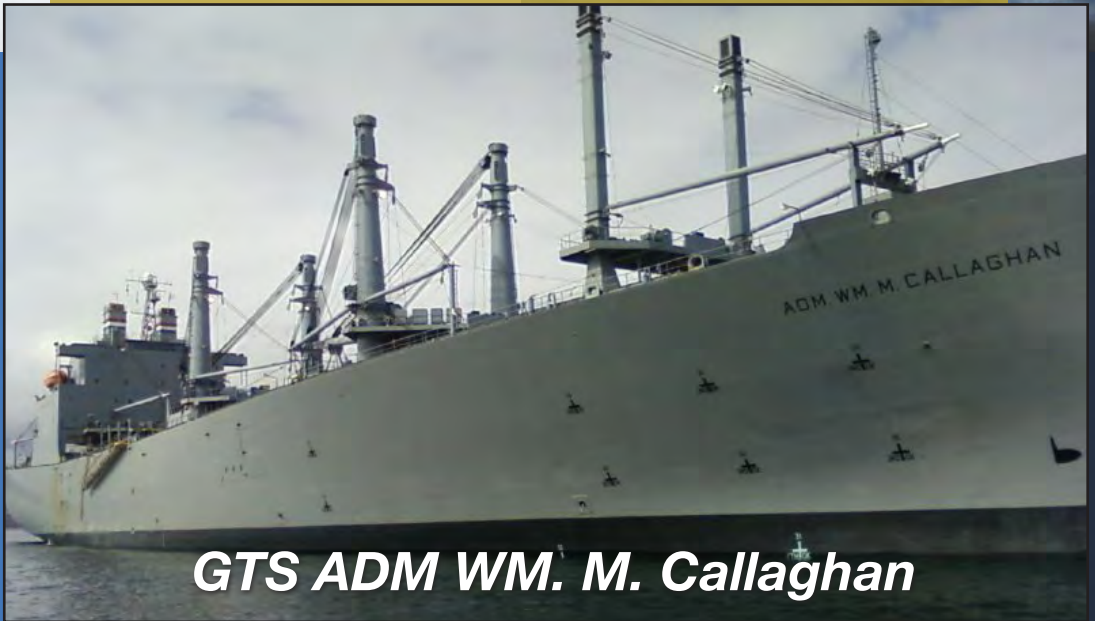
Throughout the exercise, the crew aboard Grand Canyon State and Callaghan remained flexible. They provided 24-hour security, routine shipboard maintenance, galley services and navigational and operational support. The vessels were used as a platform by Canadian forces between eight to 10 hours a day.

“One day, we were given

a one-hour notice to relocate the ship pier-side to accommodate their training schedule,” said Diamond. “We were constantly standing by to meet the vigorous training demands of the Canadian navy.”

“The exercises went very well,” said Nagy. “The sizes of Grand Canyon State and Callaghan, their unique features, and the crews’ flexibility made the exercise a success.”

“By providing a realistic platform for international forces to practice VBSS, MSC is helping to increase the security of everyone operating on the high seas or near the coast,” said Hardy.



***GTS ADM WM. M. Callaghan***



***SS Grand Canyon State***



***USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat***

SS



## HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command headquarters celebrated Women's History Month at the Washington Navy Yard with a special program March 30, featuring keynote speaker Cynthia Brown, director of security, Naval Support Activity Washington. The observance included a panel of guest speakers and attendees who participated in an open forum on "managing the challenges of our changing world."

MSC command newspaper *Sealift*, produced by MSC public affairs, received the Chief of Information Merit Award for best tabloid format newspaper in the Navy for 2008. *Sealift* rep-

resented the Navy in the Department of Defense-level competition for the Thomas Jefferson Award for the best in military print publications.

**Gani Penaranda**, maritime forces and manpower management, graduated from the Naval Postgraduate School with a Master in Business Administration March 27. He praised the program's challenging academic curriculum. "The executive MBA program broadened my perspective about the Department of the Navy and its relationship within the Defense Department. The knowledge I've gained and the resources I now have access to will be valued

as I continue my career at MSC." MSC civil service employees who are nominated by their command can be considered for this two-year, part-time, distance-learning program. The nominated employee must have served in at least a middle-level management position and have attained at least a 2.6 grade-point average for their undergraduate degree. Tuition is fully funded by the Navy.

Navy **Capt. Jesus Cantu**, director of logistics, won first place in the men's 50-and-over division in the 2009 Captain's Cup Shamrock 5K run March 15. With an outstanding time of 19 minutes and 43 seconds, he also placed 10th in the overall competition out of approximately 300 runners.

MSC welcomes **Steve Bishop**, engineering; **David Rall**, Sealift Program; **Patricia Rivolta**, commander's office;

Navy **Cmdr. Steve Pigman**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force Program; Navy **Lt. Brian Kristan**, command, control, communications and computer systems; and Navy **Lt. j.g. Matthew Thomas**, operations.

MSC bids farewell to two retiring employees. Navy **Chief Warrant Officer Charles Dennison**, command, control, communications and computer systems, retires after 25 years in the Navy and approximately two years with MSC; and **May Martin**, Sealift Program, a 25-year federal employee with 21 years at MSC, also retires this month.

MSC bids farewell to **Rasheed Khan**, Sealift Program; **Charlene Tutt**, comptroller's office; **Jennie Kopelson**, strategic planning; and Navy **Yeoman 2nd Class Josh Cochran**, Reserve programs.

## Laramie, Yukon, Grasp win food service awards for second consecutive year

By Bill Cook  
MSFSC Public Affairs

Civil service mariners and sailors aboard MSC ships at sea depend on the quality of their food to keep the ships sailing. For that reason, the Military Sealift Command Captain David M. Cook Food Service Excellence Awards encourage and reward the highest standards of culinary skill and nutrition in the food served aboard about 40 MSC civil-service crewed ships. All of these ships are eligible for nomination in the competition's three categories: East Coast large ship and West Coast large ship with crews of 75 or greater, and overall small ship with a crew of less than 75.

For the second time in two years, the same three ships have won the coveted awards — but that's not all. This is the fifth win in a row for MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie's Chief Steward Joselito "Lito" Vasquez, the third win in a row for fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon's Chief Steward Victorino "Vic" Damasco, and the third win — second consecutive — for rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp's Steward Cook Jerry Latin.

In a friendly rivalry with 10 other MSC ships, Laramie won the award in the East Coast-based large-ship category, while Yukon took the honor for the West Coast large-ship category. Grasp won the award for small-ship overall category.

"Your exceptional efforts keep morale and quality of life at peak levels and contribute to our daily mission success around the world," Rear Adm.



In the 2009 Captain David M. Cook Food Service Excellence Awards, fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie won the award in the East Coast-based large ship category. Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon took the honor for West Coast large ship, and rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp won the award for small ship overall category. Accepting the awards were Laramie's Chief Steward Joselito "Lito" Vasquez, Yukon's Chief Steward Victorino "Vic" Damasco and Supply Officer Michael Hepler, and Grasp's Steward Cook Jerry Latin. Rear Adm. Robert O. Wray, Military Sealift Command deputy commander presented the awards. Pictured above, left to right: Hepler; James Thomas, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command director of logistics; Wray; Latin; Damasco; Vasquez; and Gus Eady, MSFSC fleet liaison.

Robert D. Reilly Jr., MSC commander wrote in a note to the winners. "Congratulations on a job well done."

At sea, the life of MSC's civil service mariners can be arduous. Amidst long hours, hard work, rough seas and inclement weather, one of the few pleasant respites during the day is mealtime.

This year, the awards for best galley were presented at the International Food Service Executives Association's Joint Military Awards Conference

and Banquet in Atlanta, Ga., on April 4. Michael Hepler, supply officer on Yukon; Damasco; Vasquez; and Latin were on hand to receive the honors on behalf of their colleagues. Also at the awards were more than 680 attendees, including commanding officers, food service directors, command representatives and food management team members from the U.S. Army, MSC and other U.S. Navy commands.

Winners received monetary awards and one week of shipboard high-level culinary training provided by a certified executive chef.

"Winning a fifth time came as a big surprise," said Vasquez, who has been with MSC for more than 10 years. "The competition was greater this year, but I was happy to

be able to let the crew know we are still the best."

Damasco and Hepler were quick to agree.

They added, "It's not just winning, it is continuing to win and pass on that winning strategy to others to maintain food excellence."

The award is named in honor of the late Navy Capt. David M. Cook, former MSC director of logistics from 1995 to 1998. Cook was a visionary and catalyst in improving all aspects of the food service operations aboard MSC ships.

## FAR • EAST • HAILS

Navy Vice Adm. John Bird, commander of U.S. 7th Fleet, sent a bravo zulu message to the civilian master and crew of Military Sealift Command ocean surveillance ship USNS Impeccable April 4, recognizing what he described as "extraordinary restraint and seamanship," after Chinese-flagged vessels executed dangerous maneuvers around Impeccable in international waters March 8. "Impeccable took actions to prevent collision, safeguard the ship and protect equipment," Bird said. "I am

extremely proud of Impeccable's leadership and crew."

Bird, along with U.S. Naval Forces Korea commander Navy Rear Adm. Thomas Rowden, visited large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Pomeroy March 8 at Busan, Korea. Ship's master **Capt. Mike Finnigan** led the admirals on a tour of the vessel. Next, both admirals visited Military Sealift Command Office Korea, where they met with commanding officer Navy **Cmdr. Chris Cruz** and the command's staff members. Cruz presented the MSCO Korea

command brief, highlighting MSC's role in exercise Key Resolve 2009, held throughout South Korea, March 7-20.

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three assistant supply officer Navy **Storekeeper 1st Class Anntionette Banks** was promoted to her current rank. "There are many great things about a sea command," said Navy **Capt. Rick Daniel**, MPS Squadron Three commander. "But, one of the best is the command advancement authority and the privilege to promote a sailor like Petty Officer Banks."

The national ensign was flown over Yokohama, Japan, March 17 and Chinhae, Korea, March 31 in honor of Navy **Master Chief Boatswain's Mate**

**Andy Waite**, a Reservist assigned to Expeditionary Port Unit 113 based at Fort Worth, Texas. The U.S. flag, which will be placed into a shadow box when Waite retires later this year, is being flown at bases where Waite served over his career. The flag was flown in Thailand in January when Waite was deployed to exercise Cobra Gold 2009.

In Singapore, **Allen Berke** reported as the command's fleet operations officer. Berke reports from Norfolk, Va., where he worked for a private company. At Diego Garcia, Navy **Chief Operations Specialist William Pride** reported to MPS Squadron Two as the command's assistant operations officer.



## COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's logistics directorate hosted a supply officer conference in late March at Naval Station Norfolk. Attendees — including shoreside staff, officers in charge of afloat military departments and civil service mariner supply officers — engaged in “exceptionally well informed dialogue,” according to **Jim Thomas**, director.

Rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard visited the Royal Cambodian Navy, in Sihanoukville, Cambodia. “Interaction with the Royal Cambodian Navy has been fantastic,” said Safeguard's civil service master, **Capt. Ed Dickerson**. “[There was] lots of good training going on between ships crew and divers. The hospitality of the people has been five star.” In support

of the unique port visit, Navy **Cmdr. Bert Yordy** and his team at Ship Support Unit Guam worked logistics and husbanding.

Port Chief Engineer East **Raymond Blanchet** provided a briefing on Military Sealift Command's Hazardous Energy Control Process at the 48th Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Conference, in Hampton, Va., on March 22.

Fair winds and following seas to the following civil service mariners as they retire: **Capt. Jonathan Mellow**, First Officer **Robert Fischer**, Purser **Nicanor Abad** and Engine Utilityman **Ray Arrington**.

For more information about MSFSC or civil service mariners, visit the online newsletter at [www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter](http://www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter).

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe and fast combat support ship USNS Supply departed the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations following a successful deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and counter piracy and maritime security operations.

Tippecanoe and Supply supported the USS Ronald Reagan and Theodore Roosevelt Strike groups, USS Iwo Jima and Boxer Expeditionary Strike groups and other coalition naval forces.

Navy **Capt. Steve Kelley**, commander of Sealift Logistics Command Central and Commander Task Force 53, sent a bravo zulu to Tippecanoe and Supply for their work in the area of operations. Tippecanoe conducted

72 incident-free underway replenishments and transferred more than 13.5 million gallons of fuel. Supply conducted 69 incident-free underway replenishments and transferred more than 20.8 million gallons of fuel during its time in theater.

Fleet replenishment oilers USNS Big Horn and USNS Walter S. Diehl, along with dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea, took over the mission from Tippecanoe and Supply.

The command welcomes Navy **Cmdr. Will Burke** as director of Military Sealift Fleet Support Command Ship Support Unit, Navy **Lt. Jim Burns** as the expediting officer and Navy **Lt. Ryan Wodele** as the cargo operations and administrative officer.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Seth Clarke

*Capt. Ed Dickerson, master of Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard, accepts a bouquet of flowers as he is welcomed to Cambodia March 31. Safeguard was in Cambodia to conduct joint diving and engineering training with Cambodian forces March 31 to April 4.*

## EUROPE • NEWS

In March, **Capt. John Mattfield** and the crew of Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat from MPS Squadron One received a letter of thanks from Royal Netherlands Navy Vice Adm. P.S. Bedet, deputy commander of Allied Maritime Component Command, for the ship's participation in Loyal Mariner, a NATO maritime exercise. He said the crew was “outstanding in every respect, excelling in the various roles they

played as the opposition forces.”

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie supported U.S. combatant ships as well as NATO ships in the Mediterranean Sea in March.

Navy **Capt. Nick Holman**, Sealift Logistics Command Europe commander, welcomed the crews of Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS Balamero Lopez and tanker USNS Paul Buck to the Mediterranean.

## PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Rear Adm. Richard Landolt, commander, Amphibious Force 7th Fleet, presented civil service **Capt. Robert Wiley** with the Civilian Meritorious Service Award March 13. Wiley was honored for his service and leadership as the master of Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy during

the 2008 Pacific Partnership deployment. Wiley is currently serving as master of MSC ammunition ship USNS Flint.

MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux provided a stand-by emergency launch platform for the submarine rescue vehicle from Deep Submergence Unit,

San Diego April 1-8 in support of the nuclear submarine USS San Francisco's sea trials in the Pacific Northwest region. Sioux was equipped to launch a deep-submersible rescue vehicle from her deck to provide an emergency escape for submarine crew members.

SEALOGPAC and Ship Support Unit San Diego held their annual chili cook-off competition March 19. Eight employees from SEALOGPAC and

SSU San Diego competed for top honors. Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Quentin Burns**, SEALOGPAC operations officer, took first place honors, followed by Navy **Capt. David Kiehl**, commander of SEALOGPAC in second place and Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Doug Patterson**, Commander Task Force 33 scheduling officer, in third place. Proceeds went to the SEALOGPAC/SSU San Diego Morale, Welfare and Recreation fund.

## ATLANTIC • LINES

**Brian Hill**, Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic marine transportation specialist, assisted with the loadout of a fleet hospital on MV Sheila McDevitt at Yorktown Naval Weapons Station Cheatham Annex, Va., on March 14.

**Rich Bolduc** and **Allen Dickerson**, marine transportation specialists at SEALOGLANT's Jacksonville, Fla., office, assisted with the loading of cargo for Maritime Prepositioning Ship SS SGT Matej Kocak with equipment destined for Afghanistan, MSC-chartered ship MV Liberty with equipment destined to support operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS 1st LT Balamero Lopez. The two MSC representatives also coordinated for the discharge of MSC tanker USNS Paul Buck and Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham.

**George Pearson**, SEALOGLANT

marine transportation specialist at Military Ocean Terminal, Sunny Point, N.C., coordinated the use of Army container ship MV SSG Edward A. Carter Jr. for a weapons-of-mass-destruction exercise spearheaded by law enforcement agencies in and around Morehead City, N.C. The exercise took place pierside there and included officials from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Navy, FBI, U.S. Coast Guard, National Guard and other local authorities.

Air Force Gen. Duncan McNabb, U.S. Transportation Command commander, visited Charleston on March 23 to attend a ceremony marking the 10,000th mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle shipped by sea, many of which were loaded in Charleston on MSC ships with assistance by **Tom D'Agostino**, SEALOGLANT's representative there.

**Anthony Clark**, a member of SEALOGLANT's antiterrorism force protection team, resumed his duties March 3 after completing more than one year on active duty mobilization as chief information officer for a Department of Defense joint task force. On Jan. 19, 2008, Clark, a commander in the U.S. Navy Reserves, joined the DOD Criminal Investigation Task Force, located at Fort Belvoir, Va., under the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division Command. The more-than-200-strong organization is tasked to investigate and build criminal cases against accused terrorists in U.S. custody for presentation in a judicial venue. Clark was in charge of communications within the command and its outlying units, served as executive officer and supported the security officer. “My assignment with the task force was extremely rewarding,” said Clark. “However I am quite happy to be back home and at SEALOGLANT. This job has been the most rewarding and

satisfying of my career.”

SEALOGLANT said farewell to Navy **Cmdr. Judy Lee**, operations officer, who retired from the U.S. Navy after more than 28 years of dedicated service. She joined the Navy in 1981, and joined the SEALOGLANT staff as deputy operations officer in 1997. Lee became operations officer in 2003. “The extended family atmosphere at a small command like SEALOGLANT is hard to beat. We have depended on each other, and we have cared about each other,” Lee said. In lieu of a formal ceremony, she opted for a luncheon held at SEALOGLANT on March 27. During the luncheon, Lee noted with appreciation the professionalism and dedication to mission displayed by the operations department staff and thanked them all for the many years of friendship and mentorship.

SEALOGLANT welcomes Navy **Cmdr. Raymond P. Beno**, who takes charge of the operations department.



# New commodore takes helm of SEALOGLANT

By Bill Cook  
SEALOGLANT Public Affairs

The Norfolk-based Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic changed command during a ceremony at Naval Station Norfolk on April 3.

Navy Capt. Michael G. Graham assumed command of SEALOGLANT from outgoing commander, Navy Capt. George G. Galyo, on the flight deck of MSC fast combat support ship USNS Arctic at a 10 a.m. ceremony.

Galyo, who served as SEALOGLANT commander since May 5, 2006, praised the staff that served with him for almost three years.

"We were challenged to maintain superior sealift logistics despite shrinking resources, and you surpassed expectations," he said to the men and women of SEALOGLANT. "I am proud of our accomplishments, and I'm certain Captain Graham will be just as impressed with you as I have been."

Galyo's next assignment is with Naval Surface Force Atlantic, located at Naval Support Activity, Norfolk, as its training and readiness officer.

Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., MSC's commander, served as guest speaker for the event and lauded Galyo for his impressive service to MSC. While noting the incredible accomplishments of SEALOGLANT under Galyo's leadership, he was quick to point out the promise of great things to come under Graham's stewardship.

"I am honored and very excited to take the helm of a command as vibrant and vital as SEALOGLANT," Graham said. "It will be a rewarding challenge to carry on such a vital mission."

After a few days on the job, SEALOGLANT's newest commodore started his assessment of what needed to be accomplished for success as the command moved forward.

"MSC's transformation efforts have been successful and are now fully implemented," Graham explained to the SEALOGLANT staff during an upbeat introductory meeting. "It is clear now that we can start with a clean slate and apply our energy towards the future."

He said that one key focus area would be communications within the command and with those the command interacts, including MSC, Fleet Forces Command and U.S. 2nd Fleet.

"We need to have a questioning mindset — anticipate what follow-on questions may be raised and be prepared with answers or solutions, and from what I've seen so far, this is just the staff to do it," said Graham.

Graham, a native of Detroit, Mich., graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in aerospace engineering in 1984. His last assignment was as the U.S. Northern Command liaison officer to U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

His other assignments include serving aboard guided-missile frigates USS Carr and USS Rentz, Aegis cruiser USS Hue City, destroyer USS Barry, Cruiser-Destroyer Group One, guided-missile destroyer USS Laboon and Cruiser-Destroyer Group Ten.

Ashore, he served at Surface Warfare Development Group; Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; and U.S. Northern Command.

Graham is a graduate of the Air Force Command and Staff College, holds a master's degree in management from Troy State University and a master's degree in public administration from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.



Navy Capt. Michael Graham arrives aboard fast combat support ship USNS Arctic for the Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic change of command ceremony April 3. Graham assumed command from Navy Capt. George Galyo.



U.S. Navy photo by Bill Cook

## Deputy assistant secretary of Navy visits T-AKE 5

Rear Adm. Stephen Voetsch (far left), deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for international programs, listens intently as dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Peary's master, Capt. Gregory Horner (far right), explains the significance of the integrated remote electronic controls on Peary's bridge wing. Navy Cmdr. Christopher Mosher (left), Peary's officer in charge, and Daniel Toscano (center), Peary's cargo mate, were on hand to assist the tour.

Voetsch toured the ship April 10 as a precursor to discussing the ship class during an upcoming official U.S. visit to Saudi Arabia.

After a complete bridge and ship capacity/capability tour, Voetsch toured the engineering spaces and was given a complete overview by Peary's Chief Engineer Steven Burdi.

Saudi Arabia is planning to modernize its eastern fleet and may purchase a similar ship, among others.

Voetsch oversees all international partnership agreements, and this visit prepared him for negotiations with the Saudi government.

## MSC ship wins SECNAV environmental award

By Meghan Patrick  
MSC Public Affairs

The Secretary of the Navy announced March 26 that Military Sealift Command fast combat support ship USNS Bridge is the winner of the fiscal year 2008 SECNAV Environmental Quality Award in the small ship category. The SECNAV environmental awards recognize Navy and Marine Corps individuals, teams, ships and installations for exceptional environmental stewardship.

The 754-foot ship, which has a crew of 170 civil service mariners and currently operates out of San Diego, was cited for work in preventing pollution, ensuring readiness in responding to environmental issues, conserving resources and complying with environmental regulations.

Bridge advanced to the SECNAV competition after the ship was named as one of the Chief of Naval

Operations' quality small ship award winners in February.

Bridge voluntarily met standards stricter than required by the Navy.

Each mariner received special training in environmental management, used environmentally friendly chemicals and conducted monthly spill drills. In two years, Bridge, under the command of civil service master Capt. Jeffrey Siepert, transferred 182.7 million gallons of fuel without a significant mishap.

"Chief Mate Giudice is the leader of this effort," said Siepert. "He came up with all of the ideas. He developed all of our environmental program elements, executed them and monitors them for our continued success."

Chief Officer Thomas Giudice and other key members of the shipboard management team were responsible for management of Bridge's successful solid-waste disposal and recycling programs.

In addition, Chief Engineer Brian Muir worked to optimize boiler operations to reduce the fuel consumption by 1,000 gallons per day. Muir's initiative resulted in a reduction of carbon emissions from boiler operations by more than 4,000 tons per year, equivalent to taking more than 565 cars off the road each year.

In his message, acting Secretary of the Navy BJ Penn extended his personal congratulations and noted that the winners' accomplishments "embody the six pillars of the Navy's environmental strategy: accomplish the mission, build trust with the public, promote knowledge as a driver of environmental excellence, transform our environmental practices, link environment and acquisition and move beyond compliance." The award will be presented on May 28 at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C., at a ceremony immediately following the CNO environmental awards ceremony.